

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 EB-07 COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 SEC-01 JUSE-00

FRB-03 /071 W

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P 311625Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9729

INFO AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

USDOCOSOUTH

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USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, EIND, IT, US

SUBJ: LOCKHEED--NEWS MAGAZINE IMPLICATES PM ANDREOTTI

1. IN THE ISSUE WHICH WILL APPEAR ON SEPTEMBER 1, THE ITALIAN LEFTIST MAJOR WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINE L'ESPRESSO WILL CLAIM THAT PM ANDREOTTI RECEIVED PAYMENTS FROM LOCKHEED IN CONNECTION WITH AIRCRAFT SALES EFFORTS. THE ADVANCE TEXT OF THE STORY MADE FRONT-PAGE NEWS IN MAJOR ITALIAN DAILIES AUGUST 31.

2. L'ESPRESSO CLAIMS TO BE IN POSSESSION OF TWO COPIES OF LETTERS FROM LOCKHEED OFFICIALS TO THE FIRM'S FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES AND OF A PAGE FROM THE OFFICE DIARY OF A HIGH LOCKHEED OFFICIAL. THE FIRST LETTER, DATED SEPT. 8, 1968, FROM LOCKHEED VP KOTCHIAN TO PROF. ANTONIO LEFEBVE PURPORTEDLY REFERS TO \$28,000 PAID TO ANDREOTTI FOR "HIS VALUABLE ASSISTANCE AND THAT OF HIS PARTY IN THE SALE OF 18 'ORION' AIRCRAFT TO THE ITALIAN NAVY." (N.B. - SUCH AIRCRAFT WERE NEVER

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SOLD). THE SECOND LETTER, SENT MARCH 4, 1975 FROM A LOCKHEED

EXECUTIVE CONCERNED WITH MIDDLE EAST SALES TO THE COMPANY'S TURKISH REPRESENTATIVE, MENTIONS A PAYMENT OF \$15,000 TO ANDREOTTI. THE DIARY PAGE ALLEGEDLY SHOWS AN APPOINTMENT BETWEEN ANDREOTTI AND A HIGH LOCKHEED OFFICIAL ON MAY 10, 1975 AT THE HOTEL EXCELSIOR IN ROME. THEME OF THE ALLEGED MEETING WAS SALE TO TURKEY OF F-104 'STARFIGHTER' AIRCRAFT PRODUCED IN ITALY UNDER LICENSE. L'ESPRESSO CLAIMS TO HAVE ESTABLISHED THE GENUINENESS OF THE THREE DOCUMENTS THROUGH CALLIGRAPHIC ANALYSIS, VERIFICATION OF THE DATES IN THE DOCUMENTS AND ANALYSIS OF THE AGE OF THE PAPER. THE DOCUMENTS WERE SUPPOSEDLY FURNISHED TO L'ESPRESSO BY FORMER AND CURRENT LOCKHEED EMPLOYEES.

3. A SPOKESMAN FOR PM ANDREOTTI PROMPTLY DENIED L'ESPRESSO'S "UNFOUNDED" ALLEGATIONS, SAYING THAT THE STORY WILL BE SEEN BY THE MAN ON THE STREET FOR WHAT IT IS--A TRANSPARENT ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT THE PM AND DETRACT FROM THE EFFICIENCY OF HIS GOVERNMENT. THE DC NEWSPAPER ALSO ISSUED A DENIAL IN SIMILAR TERMS.

4. SEVERAL COMMENTATORS, INCLUDING L'ESPRESSO AND THE PCI NEWSPAPER, HINT THAT THE NEW DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN RELEASED BY THOSE HOSTILE TO THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PCI. THIS LINE TIES IN WITH OTHER RECENT ALLEGATIONS THAT THE CIA TORPEDOED ANDREOTTI'S CHANCES TO BECOME PM ON ONE OCCASION DURING THE SARAGAT PRESIDENCY. (SEE ROME 14050.) IN ADDITION TO DISTRACTING THE ATTENTION OF PM ANDREOTTI FROM OTHER PRESSING PROBLEMS, THE NEW STORY THUS TREATENS TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC MISCONCEPTIONS REGARDING US POLICY AND ACTION.

5. WILL POUCH TEXT L'ESPRESSO STORY. BEAUDRY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, BRIBERY, CORRUPTION, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ROME14256
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760330-0747
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976083/aaaaabtm.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <30 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <26 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LOCKHEED--NEWS MAGAZINE IMPLICATES PM ANDREOTTI
TAGS: PINT, EIND, IT, US, LOCKHEED, (ANDREOTTI, GIULIO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006